DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 433 311 SP 038 714

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TITLE Establishing a Foundation for Powerful Teacher Training.
PUB DATE 1999-08-11
NOTE 11p.; Paper presented at the Summer Conference of the Association of Teacher Educators (San Antonio, TX, August 7-11, 1999).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Classroom Techniques; Educational Change; Elementary Secondary Education; Higher Education; *Knowledge Base for Teaching; *Lesson Plans; Planning; Preservice Teacher Education; *Student Evaluation; *Teacher Behavior; Teacher Characteristics; Teacher Competencies; *Teacher Student Relationship; Teachers; Teaching Skills
IDENTIFIERS Pittsburg State University KS

ABSTRACT

This paper presents the process, synthesized research, and teacher training outcomes derived from a year-long process of establishing a research-based teacher education knowledge base. A broad-based committee at Pittsburg State University, Kansas, was appointed to review best practice literature, various national standards, and teacher education committee recommendations, and then write effective teacher behaviors as measurable outcomes. The committee met twice a month for a year, working through five stages (readiness, assessment, development of recommendations, trial evaluation and revision of recommendations, and presentation of final report). Various subcommittees analyzed and reviewed indicators from a number of reports, studies, and literature. They derived a composite of behavior indicators, then they wrote over 500 indicators that were grouped under the following headings: professional characteristics, relationships with students, lesson preparation, lesson presentation, classroom management, and evaluation. Finally, they reached consensus on 68 indicators, soliciting feedback from various university bodies. Once the indicators are adopted, a matrix of where each indicator will be introduced, taught, and evaluated will be developed with all university teacher training classes. (SM)

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A Paper Presented to
The 1999 Summer Conference
of the
Association of Teacher Educators

San Antonio, Texas
August 7-11, 1999

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Establishing A Foundation for Powerful Teacher Training

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Providing an organized framework and direction for training powerful teachers is a key challenge for teacher educators. In an effort to synthesize a possible method of establishing a knowledge base for a potent teacher education program, this paper will present the process, synthesized research, and teacher training outcomes derived from a year long process of establishing a research based teacher education knowledge base.

Historical Background

Over the past ten years the School of Education at Pittsburg State University has been using an outcomes–based approach to the education of its teacher candidates. After identifying 112 effective teaching behaviors, performance expectations were written for each of these behaviors and were sequenced throughout the professional preparation of each teacher candidate. Utilizing the theme of "Competent, Committed, Caring Professionals," all teacher education courses were organized around the behaviors with each syllabus identifying the specific behaviors modeled and taught. During the final student teaching experience, eighty–six of these behaviors are formally assessed by a university supervisor, academic supervisor, and a cooperating teacher using the "Student Teacher Guidance Sheet".

Continuously reviewing this knowledge base, a consensus developed among faculty, however, that there was a need to update and condense the indicators to better parallel best practices literature and the university's changing teacher training orientation. With this in mind the Dean of the College of Education, Dr. Tom Bryant, appointed a broad based committee

representing all teacher preparation stakeholders with the charge to review best practice literature, various national standards, the various teacher education committee recommendations (such as Multicultural, Technology, and Professional Development Schools plans), and to, again, write the behaviors as measurable outcomes. Appointed in June,1998, the 12 member committee comprised of students, practicing teachers, school administrators, and university faculty from different areas, was given a year to complete its task.

Process Model

To meet its charge, the committee agreed to meet at least twice a month and organize its efforts in a sequential time line. Working through possible various subcommittees to complete sub tasks, the committee worked through five stages:

Readiness
Understanding PSU's Mission, Model and Knowledge Base
(What we believe and do)

Assessment
Collecting and Analyzing Information
(What we know)

Development of Recommendations
Brainstorming, Prioritizing, Drafting, and Reaching Consensus on Recommendations
(What we want)

Trial Evaluation and Revision of Recommendations
Identifying problems with implementation and critically analyzing recommendations
(What we can do)

Presentation of Final Report
Exhibition and publicity of recommendations
(What we did)

Using this theorical framework, the committee then met 14 times throughout the school year and completed its charge through nine subcommittees.

To begin, the committee examined what the university presently does to train its teacher candidates. Then, with all committee members on the same page with what was presently

happening in the institution to train teacher candidates, the committee turned its attention to what was currently happening throughout America in teacher training. Here, various subcommittees analyzed and reviewed indicators from a number of reports, studies, or literature. Among those considered were:

A. Interstate New Teachers Assessment and Support Consortium
B. Kansas Early Career Teacher Professional Development Program
C. PSU's Student teacher training and employment data
D. Current best practices research (General and Special Ed.)
E. National Certification literature
F. PSU's Multicultural, Technology, PD school plan
G. Gallup Selection Criteria
H. Secretary's Commission of Achieving Necessary Skills (SCAN's Report)
I. Praxis Testing

A composite of behavioral indicators derived from this study of national standards, major educational reports, teacher testing, research studies, and best practices research was then derived. Using different fonts to identify the source, over 500 indicators were written and grouped by the traditional headings of:

Professional Characteristics
Relationships with Students
Lesson Preparation
Lesson Presentation
Classroom Management
Evaluation

Subcommittees representing each of these areas then synthesized, prioritized and drafted recommendations to present to the entire committee. From these recommendations, the committee then reached consensus on 68 indicators. Using a projection displayed computer screen, the committee reviewed the various outcomes and narrowed the indicators to a workable number. To perfect wording several techniques were used to reach consensus, among them the Fist of Five and ABC techniques.

Once consensus was reached on the first draft, the committee then asked various university bodies to review the indicators. After several rounds of feedback, potential wording

and assessment problems were identified and corrected with one indicator added. To perfect the indicators, the outcomes were arranged in a sequential order under specific headings and packaged to develop a "Committed, Caring, Competent Professional Educator". Again, the various university groups were asked to provide feedback. After this round of feedback, feeling that consensus was reached, the indicators were finalized and brief statements were written which synthesized the training orientation for each of the six subgroups.

The summary of stages, activity, and time line for the process were as follows:

Summary of Stages and Activity

Readiness **Aug 26, Sept 9**
Understanding PSU's Mission, Model and Knowledge Base
(What we believe and do)

Reviewed :

A. **PSU's Teacher Education Knowledge Base Development**
B. **PSU's 112 Behavioral Indicators and Definitions**
C. **Field Supervision of Teacher Candidates**

Assessment **Sept 23, Oct 7, Oct 21, Nov 11**
Collecting and Analyzing Information
(What we know)

Collected indicators from subcommittees:

A. **Interstate New Teachers Assessment and Support Consortium**
B. **Early Career Teacher Professional Development Program**
C. **PSU's Student teacher data**
D. **Current best practices research (General and Special Ed.)**
E. **National Certification literature**
F. **PSU's Multicultural, Technology, PD school plan**
G. **Gallup Selection**
H. **Secretary's Commission of Achieving Necessary Skills (SCAN's Report)**
I. **Praxis: Principles of Learning and Teaching**

Recommendations **Dec 9, Jan 20, Feb 3, Feb 17**
Compiling, Prioritizing, Drafting, & Reaching Consensus on Recommendations
(What we want)

A. Compiled master list of over 500 indicators from all subcommittees

B. Subcommittee Reports Prioritized and Drafted Recommendations
Professional Characteristics
Relationships with Students
Lesson Preparation
Lesson Presentation
Classroom Management
Evaluation
C. Knowledge Base Committee Reached Consensus on Draft

Trial Evaluation and Revisions **March 3, 17, 31**
Identifying problems with implementation & critically analyzing recommendations
(What we can do)

Asked various groups to critique:
A. Secondary Teacher Coordinating Committee
B. Council For Teacher Education
C. Dept of Curriculum and Instruction

April **Presentation of Final Report** **April 1**

Final Exit Outcomes

Thus, derived from the study of national standards, major educational reports, teacher testing, research studies, and best practices research as well as an organized process for reaching consensus, 68 indicators were developed and are as follows:

I. PROFESSIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

The teacher candidate will demonstrate specific attitudes and behaviors which illustrate a commitment to a dependable and professional demeanor, an underlying belief system that all students can learn, specific efforts that foster collaborative/caring relationships, and attitudes which foster life-long learning.

1. Is dependable and punctual.
2. Maintains a consistently pleasant, positive, and professional demeanor.
3. Believes that all students can learn and that, as a teacher, he/she can make a significant contribution to their learning.
4. Understands and respects a diverse student/parent population and has a goal to help all children learn respect for the traditions and cultures of others.
5. Promotes a classroom environment which is characterized as caring, responsive, and supportive to all students.
6. Complies with written laws and policies regarding confidentiality in handling personal information about students, parents, and personnel.

7. Knows and complies with school policies and shares in the general responsibilities and duties associated with teaching (e.g., attendance, discipline, hall duty).

8. Attends various student activities to build a caring relationship with all students.

9. Is willing to ask for help and advice from and build collaborative relationships with colleagues to share teaching insights and coordinate learning activities for all students.

10. Knows how to establish ongoing two-way communication with parents to support student progress and conduct effective parent-teacher conferences.

11. Communicates fluently using appropriate and grammatically correct oral and written language.

12. Sets goals and directions which demonstrate the desire for lifelong learning (e.g. inservice, peer collaboration, professional reading).

13. Demonstrates a desire to continually acquire knowledge and skills in emerging educational technologies.

14. Seeks to implement the recommendations from evaluations of his/her personal performance.

15. Participates in self-evaluation and reflection to enhance competence in instructional effectiveness.

II. RELATIONSHIPS WITH STUDENTS

The teacher candidate will demonstrate specific attitudes and behaviors which portray a caring relationship with all students, a positive rapport developed through enthusiasm, high student expectation, empathy, and promotion of learning extending beyond the classroom.

1. Conveys high expectations that all students will succeed and learn.

2. Models cheerful, supportive, enthusiastic behaviors which convey a caring, equitable attitude towards all students.

3. Develops positive rapport with all students by being empathic, firm, fair, and appropriately friendly.

4. Listens carefully to all students then responds in a professional manner.

5. Seeks to stimulate positive work ethics, self-efficacy, and cooperation in all students through daily interactions.

6. Utilizes learning activities and personal role modeling to develop enthusiastic learning attitudes, respect for learning, and positive values in all students.

III. INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING

The teacher candidate will demonstrate specific attitudes and behaviors which denote a strong knowledge base, an understanding of learning theory, an approach to outcomes-based instructional planning, an integrated lesson design, and a variety of instructional strategies to provide opportunities for all students to learn.

1. Understands the appropriate scope and sequence of objectives for teaching the curriculum.

2. Develops clear short and long term instruction plans (e.g. lesson plans, units, and/or modules) which include objectives, materials, activities, and evaluation techniques based on the curriculum objectives.

3. Has an up-to-date knowledge of the subject matter and attempts to incorporate diverse and practical illustrations, examples and applications in lesson material and activities.

4. Selects materials and activities consistent with the objectives of the lesson and the students' prerequisite skills, attention span, and learning styles.

5. Has knowledge of and implements assorted instructional techniques and technology to provide for instructional variation and integration with other disciplines.

6. Reflects an understanding of learning theory and knowledge of human development in planning for developmentally appropriate instruction.

7. Structures lesson planning to allow for individualization, reteaching, and alternative assessment so all students could meet the objectives.

IV. INSTRUCTION

The teacher candidate will demonstrate specific attitudes and behaviors which provide active student-centered instruction characterized by clarity, variety, and flexibility.

1. Conducts class with poise, confidence, and enthusiasm.

2. Presents lessons in a clear, logical, and sequential manner.

3. Insures that lesson materials and information are professionally displayed and accessible to all students.

4. Communicates clearly to all students the objective and purpose of each lesson.

5. Reviews or provides an anticipatory set in an effort to provide lesson continuity and/or to gain the interest of the student for each lesson.

6. Makes the lesson relevant and meaningful for all students by relating it to real world situations.

7. Utilizes various instructional strategies appropriate for the objectives of the lesson.

8. Uses suitable teaching strategies to accommodate learning styles.

9. Incorporates individualized strategies for students with special needs (e.g., English as a second language, learning disabled, behavioral disordered).

10. Uses available educational technologies and teaching aids to enhance instruction (e.g., computers, multimedia, the internet).

11. Encourages participation from all students through effective questioning strategies (e.g., equal distribution, level variation, adequate wait time, probing and clue giving, and appropriate correctives and feedback).

12. Responds to student questions in a concerned and effective manner.

13. Provides opportunities for all students to successfully apply or practice knowledge and skills learned.

14. Facilitates instructional strategies which provide opportunities to work individually and collaboratively in groups.

15. Conducts lessons at an appropriate pace so all students have the opportunity to learn the intended objectives.

16. Provides focus on important points and checks for understanding.

17. Accomplishes smooth and orderly transitions between parts of the lesson.

18. Gives clear directions.

19. Individualizes assignments that all students can complete on their own with a high success rate.

20. Effectively achieves closure to each lesson and/or class period.

21. Provides instruction that maximizes time on appropriate tasks by keeping all students involved in learning.

22. Demonstrates flexibility in teaching techniques as the situation requires.

23. Encourages and facilitates opportunities for students to think creatively and critically, to solve problems, and to develop the skills needed to live, learn, and work in a global society.

24. Teaches tolerance by example and by design, striving to develop a classroom atmosphere which recognizes the value of all people regardless of their uniqueness.

V. CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

The teacher candidate will demonstrate specific attitudes and behaviors which promote an orderly, safe classroom environment conducive to learning by providing clear rules and procedures which are taught, monitored and consistently reinforced.

1. Believes in and communicates a well-defined classroom management system.

2. Organizes and maintains the physical environment of the classroom in a functional, pleasant, and orderly manner conducive to student learning and safety.

3. Establishes, teaches, and reinforces classroom expectations, rules, routines, and procedures fairly and with an awareness of cultural attitudes and mores.

4. Monitors and keeps track of all student behavior and activities in the classroom at all times.

5. Displays consistency in dealing with behavior in the least disruptive manner, utilizing appropriate positive and negative consequences.

6. Handles multiple tasks, intrusions, and distractions while maintaining momentum and smoothness in the lesson.

7. Understands how to handle unexpected classroom incidents and emergencies appropriately.

8. Analyzes classroom problems and resourcefully seeks strategies to help develop a learning environment which encourages self-management, social interaction, high time-on-task, and active engagement.

VI. EVALUATION

The teacher candidate will demonstrate specific attitudes and behaviors which establish fair expectations, provide for multiple assessment opportunities, monitor progress in a timely fashion, provide feedback through multiple means, and collaborate with others to meet the needs of all students.

1. Develops and communicates to all students and parents a fair evaluation system which respects the legal rights of all involved.
2. Maintains clear and reasonable work standards and due dates.
3. Consults a variety of sources (e.g., student records, counselors, resource specialists, parent conferences, test results, and other diagnostic tools) to determine the learning needs and capabilities of individual students.
4. Routinely uses a number of different techniques to assess the students' understanding of material as it is taught.
5. Makes changes in instruction based on feedback from multiple classroom assessment sources.
6. Uses multiple methods of assessing and evaluating student performance.
7. Gives timely and specific oral and/or written feedback on all assignments and provides corrective action so all students can succeed.
8. Has knowledge of the referral process and can use specialized services as student needs arise.

Uses of the Indicators

Once the indicators are adopted, a matrix of where each indicator will be introduced, taught and evaluated will be developed with all university teacher training classes. This will assure all indicators are introduced, taught, and evaluated. In the final 16 week student teaching experience all 68 indicators will be used in the evaluation. In essence, through an organized process, best practices research was synthesized and adapted to fit the univeristy's teacher training orientation to establish a research based teacher training knowledge base.